



LISA MIEROP'S GARDEN

'Roses to Rock Gardens' tour

The Van Vleck House & Gardens will sponsor a house tour of gardens in Montclair and Glen Ridge, on Tuesday, June 3, from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. The tour showcases six private gardens plus the nearly six-acre Van Vleck property.

The informal tour offers an opportunity to enjoy seasonal displays at residential properties not normally open for public viewing. The self-guided format gives visitors the flexibility to start their individual tours at any of the gardens and progress at their own pace. The event takes place rain or shine.

Tickets may be purchased in advance for \$25, or on the day of the tour at the Van Vleck House, 21 Van Vleck St., for \$30. Boxed lunches, prepared by the Cheese Shop, may be reserved in advance for \$15 and picked up at the Van Vleck House. For information about the tour, call (973) 744-0837 or visit www.vanvleck.org.

Proceeds from the tour will help maintain Van Vleck as a community resource. The gardens opened for the season in April, and will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Thursdays until dusk, during June, July and August.

Van Vleck House & Gardens is dedicated to preserving for public enrichment the spirit and beauty of this late 19th- and 20th-century house and gardens. Continuing the Van Vleck family's commitment to the community and to horticultural excellence, the house serves as a center for nonprofit organizations. The gardens are open to the public for display, education and research.

Garden Descriptions

detailing the extensive collection of woodland plants. Rhododendrons were a special interest for Van Vleck. He successfully hybridized several unusual yellow varieties, which have been registered with the Royal Horticultural Society. Tour-takers may have their reserved lunches on the terrace under the Chinese Wisteria vines.

A cottage-style garden

This cottage-style garden is an "experiment in progress" begun about 15 years ago by the owner of a Montclair-based landscape design firm. It encompasses both cottage and woodland styles. The front portion facing south grows a full range of bulbs, perennials and flowering shrubs in a mixed planting designed for maximum textural and color contrasts. The rear portion borders a picturesque brook.

Grand yet understated

Elegantly understated, this grand garden was designed to complement the architectural presence of the house and provide interest year round. The garden divides into distinct "public" and "private" worlds, each featuring a different approach to the plantings. In the shady public area bordering the street, sweeping masonry walls encompass large borders of evergreen and flowering shrubs chosen for their scale in the setting or as a screen to the rear of the property. These borders also offer large seasonal displays of colorful bulbs and annuals, many of which are features prominently in limestone urns, troughs and baskets.

The private garden behind the

coming and whimsical space. After passing through the front yard graced by a border of perennials and ground cover, enter a quiet oasis in the rear of the property. Yews, boxwoods and evergreens give the garden structure, accented by a bright assortment of perennials, herbs and annuals. A cascade of roses spills over the garage.

Hidden treasure

Tucked away in the South End, this garden is a labor of love. The owner has drawn on his tropical heritage and his extensive experience in the community gardens of Brooklyn, N.Y., from where he moved to Montclair. In just three short seasons, he has brought all his plants from Brooklyn and transformed an ordinary, flat suburban back yard into a delightful garden of the senses. This garden is constructed with a passion for found objects, recycled materials, "passalong" plants, re-seeding annuals, heirloom vegetables and medicinals.

Privacy fit for a queen

A century-old Queen Anne style home has a majestic setting in this garden that emphasizes privacy and beauty in all seasons. The wrought iron entrance gates are nestled between two ancient cypresses. Layered plant material extends the front border to provide privacy as well as to define the interior garden. The back garden draws on the architecture of the house, knitting the two together.

A blaze of color

Approach the gardens of this 1903 Dutch colonial by strolling along the driveway beside a border